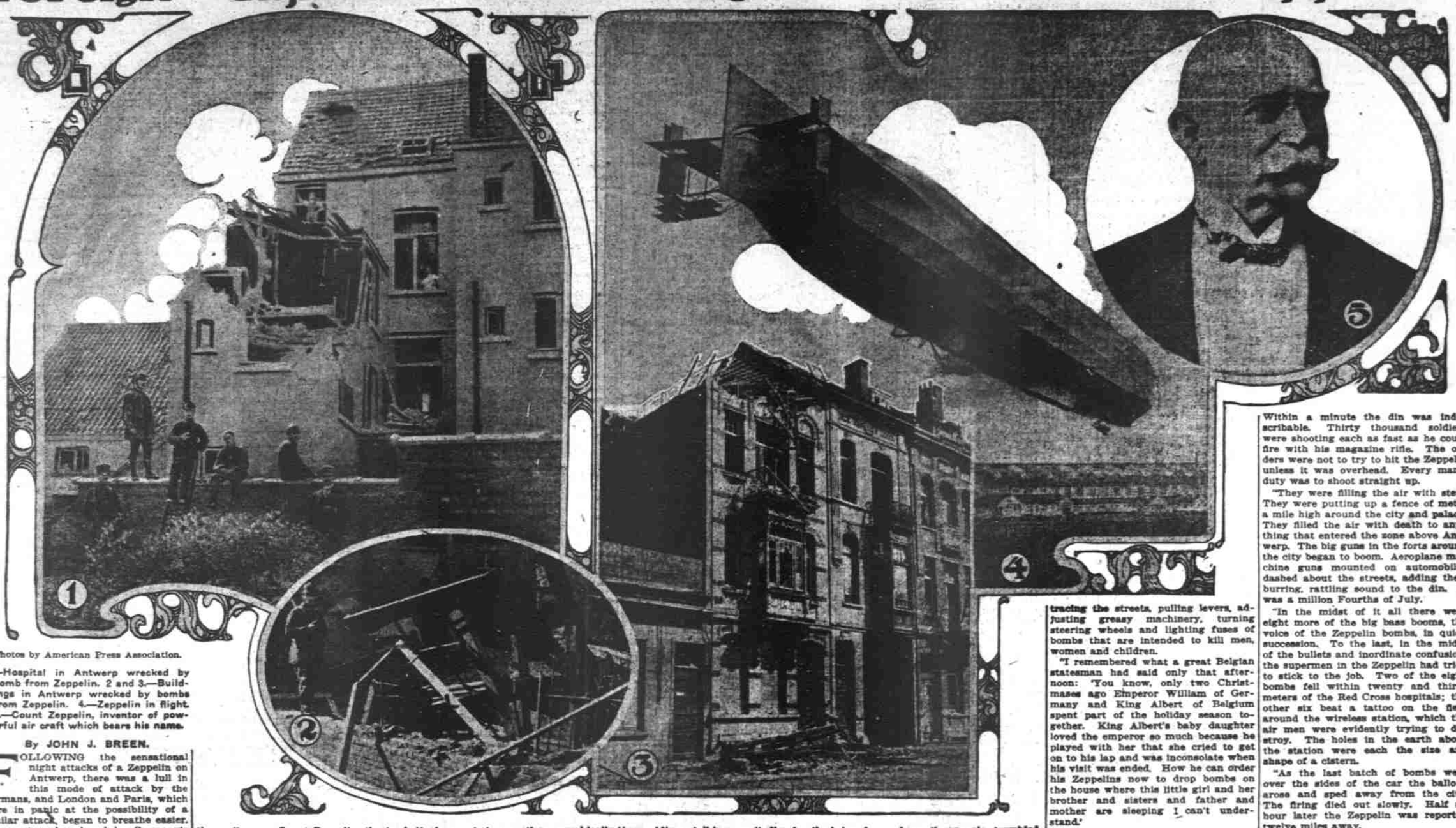
TOPICS-ON-THE-TIP-OF-THE-WORLD'S-TONGUE

Foreign Capitals Dread Night Attacks of Zeppelins



Photos by American Press Association.

1.—Hospital in Antwerp wrecked by bomb from Zeppelin. 2 and 3.—Buildings in Antwerp wrecked by bombs from Zeppelin. 4.—Zeppelin in flight. 5.—Count Zeppelin, inventor of powerful air craft which bears his name.

By JOHN J. BREEN.

FOLLOWING the sensational night attacks of a Zeppelin on Antwerp, there was a lull in this mode of attack by the Germans, and London and Paris, which were in panic at the possibility of a similar attack, began to breathe easier. The part to be played by Germany's aerial navy was yet to be disclosed. Opinion on that phase of the war covered a wide range, some of the observers contending that the destructive possibilities of the Zeppelin had been widely exaggerated, others asserting that the Germans have yet to reveal the terrible effectiveness of this arm of their service.

This modern instrument of death—the Zeppelin—had its real beginning in the civil war. Count Zeppelin, the inventor of the German dirigibles, made his first balloon ascent in a captive balloon at Fredericksburg in 1863, when he was serving in the Union army in the role of a foreign attache.

From that day Count Zeppelin has devoted not only his time, but his fortune, to the development of the form of air craft which now bears his name.

A special correspondent of the United Press, an eyewitness of the Zeppelin attack on Antwerp, thus graphically describes what happened:

"I watched the Zeppelin dropping bombs upon Antwerp, and such perfection only makes war more terrible, with a refinement of barbarism.

"The wildest flights of imagination couldn't approach what happened.

"Not until 1 o'clock in the morning did the big red harvest moon begin to sink. The streets were deserted. An hour and a half later I was awakened by soldiers talking excitedly in the streets beneath my window. But above the sound of their voice was a terrific whirring high in the sky. I jumped from bed, rushed to the window and looked upward. There was a terrific explosion faraway—a deep, booming roar.

"A moment later a spark came whirling and circling through the air like a shooting star gone mad. It sank into the sky line of roofs and another explosion boomed as the people trembled.

"And then up against the stars I saw the Zeppelin, perhaps a mile high and out over the outskirts of the town. There's a sickening feeling of utter helplessness in witnessing such a sight, and mingled with this feeling there is a fascination in the thought that such a thing is not superhuman; that up there in the sky are men, human beings, working, carrying out orders, watching maps of the city, tracing the streets, pulling levers, adjusting greasy machinery, turning steering wheels and lighting fuses of bombs that are intended to kill men, women and children.

"I remembered what a great Belgian statesman had said only that afternoon: 'You know, only two Christmases ago Emperor William of Germany and King Albert of Belgium spent part of the holiday season together. King Albert's baby daughter loved the emperor so much because he played with her that she cried to get on to his lap and was inconsolate when his visit was ended. How he can order his Zeppelins now to drop bombs on the house where this little girl and her brother and sisters and father and mother are sleeping I can't understand.'

Thousands of Shots Fired.

"Another spark fell, and there was a third explosion. Then a new sound filled the air. It began faraway. It was the rattle of rifles, thousands of them. The firing grew nearer and louder. There were sharp orders. Under my window the soldiers began to shoot, the flashes lighting my room. They held their rifles straight upward. The sound grew louder and louder. Within a minute the din was indescribable. Thirty thousand soldiers were shooting each as fast as he could fire with his magazine rifle. The orders were not to try to hit the Zeppelin unless it was overhead. Every man's duty was to shoot straight up.

"They were filling the air with steel. They were putting up a fence of metal a mile high around the city and palace. They filled the air with death to anything that entered the zone above Antwerp. The big guns in the forts around the city began to boom. Aeroplane machine guns mounted on automobiles dashed about the streets, adding their burring, rattling sound to the din. It was a million Fourths of July.

"In the midst of it all there were eight more of the big bass booms, the voice of the Zeppelin bombs, in quick succession. To the last, in the midst of the bullets and inordinate confusion, the supermen in the Zeppelin had tried to stick to the job. Two of the eight bombs fell within twenty and thirty meters of the Red Cross hospitals; the other six beat a tattoo on the field around the wireless station, which the air men were evidently trying to destroy. The holes in the earth about the station were each the size and shape of a cistern.

"As the last batch of bombs went over the sides of the car the balloon arose and sped away from the city. The firing died out slowly. Half an hour later the Zeppelin was reported twelve miles away.

"Two children, three women and five men had been injured, though none seriously, and three houses destroyed. Nearly all the terrified families of the city had taken refuge in the cellars, for a week before the same Zeppelin had bombarded the town and killed twelve persons. The bullets fired by the soldiers came falling from the sky, but aside from breaking skylights they caused no injury."

FRANCE HAS FAITH IN JOFFRE THE SILENT

Photos by American Press Association.

Upper—General Joffre (fourth from left) conferring with staff officers. Lower—Belgian cook squad in field preparing rations for French troops.

THE world should seek to adjust itself now to the conception of a new type of military genius. The old type familiar to us in history and developed to its extreme in Prussia—the kaiser's ideal, the man of blood and iron, cold, hard, abrupt, unemotional—has met its match apparently in a genial gentleman, rather short and stout, the possessor of a mild eye, a heavy drooping white mustache and a head of white curly hair; a man of great courtesy and considerate regard for his humblest caller, one who would make a splendid Santa Claus with the addition of a beard to match his hair or a popular banker and first citizen of some flourishing American community. This man is General Joseph Joffre, commander in chief of the French forces. The French, anxious to emphasize in their national hero his most warlike attribute, call him Joffre le Taciturne (Joffre the Silent).

Possibly his habit of silence has something to do with the lack of knowledge concerning him outside of France. In France they knew enough about him two years ago to make him general in chief by unanimous vote of the higher war council, but over here in America his was a mere name, if even that, before the war, and now the data concerning him are still all too meager. It is as if his genius, or whatever it is that has enabled him to defeat the kaiser's famous war machine, had been kept by the French as a surprise for their enemies, much as the Germans seem to have kept as a surprise that wonderful gray green color of their uniforms.

It may perhaps help us to a better appreciation of General Joffre as a man and officer if we bear in mind the many characteristics which he seems to possess in common with one of our own national heroes, Colonel Goethals, the builder of the Panama canal. To begin with, both of these men, the world's greatest peace victor and the world's greatest war victor (to date), are military engineers, educated and trained as such. Colonel Goethals looks a bit more like a soldier, to be sure, but both possess so large a fund of human sympathies that they have been able to endear themselves personally to great bodies of men—the builder of the Panama canal to the vast army of workmen of all nationalities employed in digging the big ditch, the commander in chief of the French army to the millions of soldiers he commands for the defense of his country. Patience, impartiality, firmness and a clear understanding of human nature, coupled in each case with a rare singleness of purpose and the ability to keep their own counsel—these are the "hooks of steel" with which these two men have bound their organizations to themselves.

General Joffre entered the army in the war of 1870 when only eighteen years old and was promoted for gallantry on the field by Marshal MacMahon. Immediately after the war he was intrusted with the rebuilding of the forts around Paris, the forts that today are prepared again to defend the capital against the Germans. Made a captain at twenty-two, Joffre was sent into the east of France to build up the chain of fortresses there that have proved of such value in resisting the invaders.

Afterward he spent many years raising impenetrable fortifications at Tonkin, island of Formosa, and Madagascar. His next achievement was suppression of the uprising in Dahomey. There, with a small force, he crushed the natives and after a short campaign marched into Timbuktu. Since that time Joffre has been at the head of the French war college.

WILLIAMS SCOTT.

Black Fighters Aid Allies' Campaign

AS the history of the great European struggle is being written the regiments known affectionately to France as the Turkos are adding daily to their record of daring achievements. In bayonet encounters they broke through the German lines without firing more than a few shots and recaptured and brought back field guns which the French troops had abandoned on the previous day. They seem to disdain the rifle and machine gun fire poured into them, refusing to listen to the officers who try to keep them under cover.

Cold steel played a considerable part in the battle of armies fighting along the Aisne, the Oise and Woevre. The most remarkable point about these encounters is that the troops scarcely see each other before they actually come hand to hand. The recklessness displayed at the beginning of hostilities, with the resultant carnage through the machine guns, almost disappeared and every movement of the attacking and defending force was carried out with the utmost caution until the moment of actual conflict. The Germans suffered most in these engagements, for the French troops from Africa are adepts with the bayonet, and they waited warily in the trenches until their adversaries were so close that a quick dash brought them together.

France, soon after Germany declared war, disclosed its determination to make use of the splendid regiments of native troops from her colonies.

The Turkos are the tirailleurs Algerians, dusky Algerian infantrymen, splendid fighters, well disciplined and always in the pink of condition from their continuous border fighting. Nine regiments of these fierce Algerian fighters has France at her back, some 20,000 fighting men, who have proved their valor in every campaign in which they have been engaged.

The Foreign legion, outside of three companies of mounted infantry, the zouaves and the Turkos are foot soldiers. The zouaves are Frenchmen, the legionaries of all nationalities, and the Turkos are natives. The Chasseurs d'Afrique and the spahis are cavalry, the former French and the latter native Arabian horsemen.

The Foreign legion is made up of two regiments of six battalions each, an effective force of 9,800 men, fully 30 per cent of whom are Alsatians who will not serve in the German army. Another 20 per cent, it is estimated, are Germans, most of them deserters from the German army's rigid rule. The rest is made up of adventurers from all over the world, many of them men who have nothing to live for and who want to die "with their boots on."

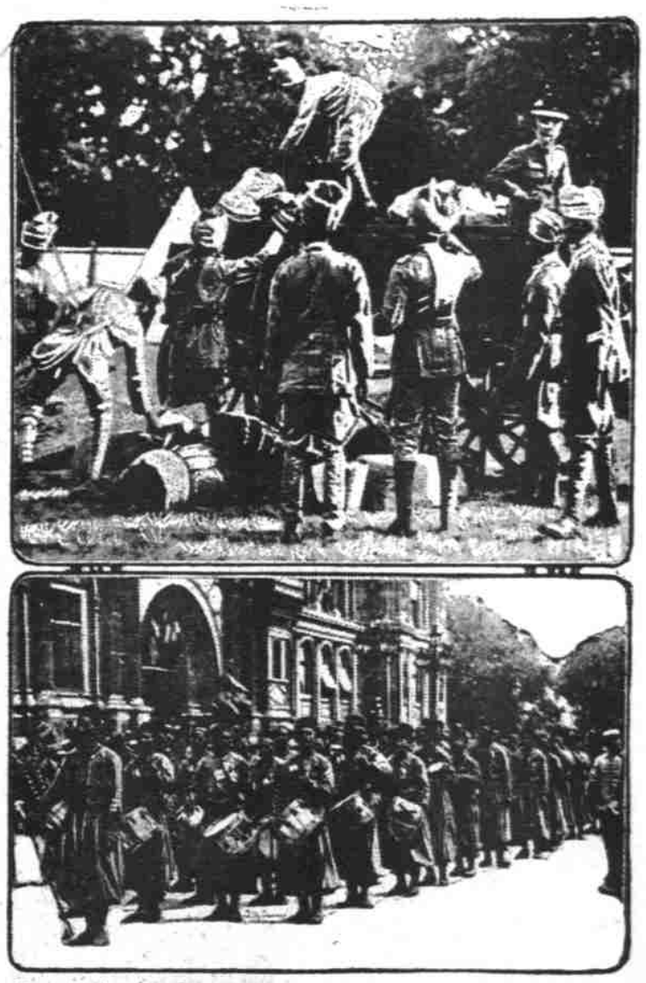
The black troops which England pitted against the Germans are all Indians who have been trained in modern warfare by English officers.

The main strength of the Indian army is in its infantry. Brahmans, Rajputs, Jats, Sikhs, Punjabis, Dogras, Mahrattas and Gurkhas, of all castes and of several religions—Mohammedan, Hindu, Buddhists—are all warriors who will lay down their lives in eagerness for the British raj, and the dark skinned regiments of the Indian army form a fighting force hard to stop.

Among the most interesting as well as the most formidable fighting outfits in the Indian army are the Gurkhas. These little fighters, who come from the region of Nepal and who trace their descent from the Rajputs, would rather fight than eat. In appearance the Gurkhas are deceiving. They are short, stocky little men of somewhat the appearance of the Japanese, although a little heavier. And they wear perpetual grins on their faces. The grin does not come off when they go into a fight.

The Gurkhas were conquered by the British in 1814 after years of fighting and have become loya subjects of England.

WALTON WILLIAMS.



Photos by American Press Association.

Upper—English Indian regiment unloading equipment. Lower—French Turkos.